

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT 'ISLĀM'

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of Central Africa."

A.M.L. Stoddard, Islām - The Religion of all Prophets, p.56.

"Islām is a religion that is essentially rationalistic in the widest sense of this term considered etymologically and historically. The definition of rationalism as a system that bases religious beliefs on principles furnished by the reason applies to it exactly. It cannot be denied that many doctrines and systems of theology and also many superstitions, from worship of saints to the use of rosaries and amulets, have become grafted on the main trunk of Muslim creed. But in spite of the rich development, in every sense of the term, of the teachings of the Prophet, the Qur'ān has invariably kept its place as the fundamental staring point, and the dogma of unity of God has always been proclaimed therein with a grandeur, a majesty, an invariable purity and with a note of sure conviction, which it is hard to find surpassed outside the pale of Islām.."

Edward Montet, 'La Propagande Chretienne et ses Adversaries Musulmans' Paris 1890.

"I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a 'Muslim' as one 'surrendered to God', but I believe that embedded in the Qur'ān and other expressions of the Islāmic vision are vast stores of divine truth from which I and other occidentals have still much to learn, and Islām is certainly a strong contender for the supplying of the basic framework of the one religion of the future."

W. Montgomery Watt, Islām and Christianity Today, London 1983, p.6.

happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today."

G.B. Shaw, The Genuine Islām, Vol. 1, No. 81936.

"The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islām and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islāmic virtue".

A.J. Toynbee, Civilization on Trail, New York, 1948, p.205.

"The rise of Islām is perhaps the most amazing event in human history. Springing from a land and previously negligible people, Islām spread within a century over half the earth, shattering great empires, overthrowing long-established religions, remoulding the souls of races, and building up a whole new world - world of Islām. The closer we examine this development the more extraordinary does it appear. The other great religions won their way slowly, by painful struggle and finally triumphed with the aid of powerful monarchs converted to the new faith. Christianity had its Constantine, Buddhism its Asoka, and Zoroastrianism its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult the mighty force of secular authority, not so Islām. Arising in a desert land sparsely inhabited in human annals. Islām rallied forth on its great adventure with the slenderest human backing and against the heaviest material odds. Yet Islām triumphed with seemingly miraculous ease, and a couple of generations saw the Fiery Crescent borne victorious from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas and from the desert of Central Asia to the deserts

The Islām that was revealed to the last Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), is the continuation and culmination of all preceding revealed religions and hence it is for all times and all people. This status of Islām is sustained by glaring facts. Firstly, there is no other revealed book extent in the same form and content as it was revealed. Secondly, no other revealed religion has any convincing claim to provide guidance in all walks of human life for all times. But Islām addresses humanity at large and offers basic guidance regarding all human problems. Moreover, it has withstood the test of fourteen hundred years and has all the potentialities of establishing an ideal society as it did under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

It was a miracle that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) could win even his toughest enemies to the fold of Islām without adequate material resources. Worshippers of idols, blind followers of the ways of forefathers promoters of tribal feuds, abusers of human dignity and blood, became the most disciplined nation under the guidance of Islām and its Prophet (PBUH). Islām opened before them vistas of spiritual heights and human dignity by declaring righteousness as the sole criterion of merit and honour. Islām shaped their social, cultural, moral and commercial life with basic laws and principles which are most in conformity with human nature and hence applicable in all times as human nature does not change.

It is so unfortunate that the Christian West instead of sincerely trying to understand the phenomenal success of Islām during the centuries of the Crusades this trend gained much force and impetus and huge literature was produced to tarnish the image of Islām. But Islām has begun to unfold its genuineness to the modern scholars whose bold and objectives observations on Islām belie all the charges levelled against it by the so-called unbiased orientalists. Here we furnish some observations on Islām by acknowledged non-Muslim scholars of modern time. Truth needs no advocates to plead on its behalf.

It is hoped that the following observations will contribute to initiating an objective evaluation of Islām.

"It (Islām) replaced monkish ness by manliness. It gives hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition of the fundamental facts of human nature."

Canon Taylor, Paper read before the Church Congress at Wolverhampton, Oct. 7, 1887.

"Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islām, because as I read in the Qur'ān I find those dynamic principles of life, non mystic but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world."

Saronjini Naidu, 'The ideals of Islām', 1918.

"History makes it clear however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islām at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated."

De Lacy O'Learly, Islām at the Crossroads, London, 1923 p.8.

"Islām has a still further service to render to the cause of humanity. It stands after all nearer to the real East than Europe does, and it possesses a magnificent tradition of inter-racial understanding and co-operation. No other society has such a record of success in uniting in an equality of status, of opportunity, and of endeavours so many and so various races of mankind... Islām has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of East and West is to be replaced by co-operation, the mediation of Islām is an indispensable condition. In its hands lies very largely the solution of the problem with which Europe is faced in its relation with the East. If they unite, the hope of a peaceful issue is measurably enhanced. But if Europe, by rejecting the co-operation of Islām, throws it into the arms of its rivals, the issue can only be disastrous for both."

H.A.R. Gibb, Whither Islām, London, 1932, p.379.

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him, the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it much needed peace and